

# GAVLAK

**GAVLAK Palm Beach** is delighted to present a group show comprising recent work from New Wave’s 2020-2021 artists-in-residence, **Estelle Maisonett, Joiri Minaya, Renzo Ortega, and Asser Saint-Val**—the first four artists invited to be in residence with the program. Each working in South Florida for six to eight weeks, the artists included in ***Maisonett, Minaya, Ortega, Saint-Val: Selections from the New Wave Residents*** manipulate conventions of form and media in their renderings of both individual and communal narratives. In a multifaceted exploration of identity, transformation, migration and belonging, the politics of representation is a current that runs throughout the exhibition, on view from **August 25 through September 26**.

New Wave—founded by Sarah Gavlak in 2018—supports emerging artists from marginalized communities, reflecting New Wave’s mission to cultivate dialogue and foster understanding across avenues of difference. In nurturing the practices of artists from historically underrepresented backgrounds, New Wave breaks down barriers faced due to gender, sexuality, race, and immigration status, emphasizing the work of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC artists. As a recent but already impactful fixture of Florida’s art scene, New Wave provides a critical bridge between the South Florida region and broader art-world currents, elevating the compelling ideas emerging from beyond traditional art-world centers. A portion of the proceeds from the show will benefit New Wave’s residency program and public programming.

“New Wave’s world-class artist-in-residence program was born out of a desire to transform South Florida’s creative landscape with newfound support for emerging artists and a platform for radical ideas,” said **New Wave Founder Sarah Gavlak**. “Since launching the residency in 2019, we’ve combined the strengths of collectors, community stakeholders, and art-world players to fashion generative residencies, resulting in a number of new works that we look forward to unveiling in our Palm Beach group show.”

“In anticipation of the fourth edition of New Wave Art Wknd this December, we’re thrilled to showcase the recent work of our first four artists-in-residence,” said **New Wave Program Director Sarah Haimés**. “Rich with personal, political, and pop culture references, the works in the exhibition reflect on each artist’s individual exploration of identity through inventive imagery and compelling narratives.”

Lima-born, North Carolina-based artist **Renzo Ortega**, whose practice is informed by the artist’s immigrant journey, paints in acrylic and incorporates other materials such as rain water and beach sand—sourced during his residency—resulting in multidimensional renderings imbued with a sense of regeneration and transformation. Embracing the metaphorical charges of the sea as a site of rebirth and dynamism, Ortega’s vibrant **Mar Bravo** series alludes to what the artist describes as the “potluck of possibilities” that results from equal access and opportunity. Regarding paintings as historical documents, Ortega’s at times abstract forms suggest the richness that results from cultural exchange in a diverse society.

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Bronx-based Mexican Puerto-Rican artist **Estelle Maisonett**, who primarily works with found objects, photography, and sourced clothing, constructs tableaus that offer an intimate exploration of how identity is informed by locations and materials. Maisonett's creative process centers upon the artist's rumination on her own identity and the communities to which she belongs, in these recent works seeking to unearth how particular objects and landscapes, with which the body interacts, come to be invested with sociocultural meaning. Depictions of the human body itself are noticeably absent from Maisonett's life-size genre scenes, prompting reflection on the imagined figures suggested by the fabric and printed imagery affixed to the canvas.

Through the manipulation of found garments, Dominican-United Statesian artist **Joiri Minaya** unseats the sanitized images of Caribbean life dominant in the colonial imagination. For the works in this exhibition, Minaya sourced tropical-print shirts from thrift stores, noting their overlapping visual themes despite differences in material, time of production, and circumstance. With an air of romanticization, these textiles depict the Caribbean as, in the words of the artist, "a space constructed of carefully chosen fantasies, repeated ad nauseam, dissolving any original meaning or cultural contributions into a watered-down, decontextualized capitalist production." With her interventions into printed landscapes, hibiscus flowers drip blood and US navy ships pepper the ocean, disrupting those enduring representational modes which seek to erase violent histories.

Haiti-born, South Florida-based artist **Asser Saint-Val**'s recent works from his current series titled ***Magickal Entities*** reflect the artist's interest in biological processes and their effects on self-consciousness. Of particular interest to the artist is Neuromelanin, a term coined by psychiatrist Richard King to refer to the manifestation of African spirituality in embodied practices, and the pineal gland, which is believed to shape the imagination and subconscious. Through multi-sensory, immersive installations strongly rooted within Surrealist traditions, Saint-Val guides viewers through experiences meant to enhance a sense of self-awareness and connection with one's own identity.

In the exhibition, the New Wave artists survey diverse strategies for amplifying cutting-edge cultural, social, and political discourse. Including works created over the course of these residencies, the show exemplifies the rich potential of New Wave's programming, displaying great strength in addressing complex subject matter through a lens that is as nuanced as it is visionary. Showcasing the important work of these talented emerging artists, ***Maisonett, Minaya, Ortega, Saint-Val: Selections from the New Wave Residents*** opens a door to rigorous practices that will only continue to grow as they further their contributions to the critical conversations of our time.

## ABOUT THE NEW WAVE ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

New Wave's mission is to foster a vital dialogue around diversity, inclusivity, immigration, and equal rights for women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities through public programs, and by hosting an artist-in-residence program for emerging artists from marginalized communities at Rosemary Square in West Palm Beach. Founded in 2019, New Wave's residency program offers exposure to some of the nation's top collectors and art world players, an apartment and studio space for 6 weeks, as well as unrestricted funds of \$5,000. The first four artists selected for the residency comprise Renzo Ortega, Estelle Maisonett, Joiri Minaya, and Asser Saint-Val—further reading about each artist can be found on [www.newwave.art](http://www.newwave.art).